

Harvard Allston Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 13, 2006
Honan-Allston Library
7:00 p.m.

I. Attendance:

Harvard Allston Task Force

Paul Berkeley
Mary Helen Black
John Bruno
Cathleen Campbell
John Cusack
Rita DiGesse
Michael Hanlon
Millie Hollum McLaughlin
Bruce Houghton
Harry Mattison
Ray Mellone
Tim Norton

Boston Redevelopment Authority

Gerald Autler
Linda Kolwalcky
Tom Miller

Harvard University

John Audi
Harris Band
Jim Barrows
Nathalie Beauvais
Chris Gordon
Gary Hammer
Tom Lentz
Kevin McCluskey
Andy O'Brien
Dan Rabinovitz
Alison Reinhardt
Russ Porter
Kathy Spiegelman

II. Minutes

Gerald Autler began the meeting at 7:10 p.m. and introduced Tom Miller, Director of Economic Development at the BRA, who he said will be integrally involved in the Task Force and Harvard's IMP process. He handed out the meeting minutes from the January 26th meeting and stated that he had not received any comments or feedback from when he distributed them to the Task Force. Ray Mellone made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded. All Task Force members agreed, and the minutes were approved.

Gerald asked everyone to put their name on the sign-in sheet before leaving and asked if the Task Force members could provide him with their email address as a convenient way to contact the Task Force members. Gerald asked the Task Force members to indicate if they did not want their email address shared with anyone else.

Harvard has offered to post the agendas, meeting schedule, and meeting minutes on their website, <http://www.allston.harvard.edu/>. Although this has not been established yet, Harvard will let everyone know when it is up and running. The BRA will also post project related information on its website, along with access to key documents. Gerald mentioned that if there is a desire to create an online discussion forum, it should be lead by the community and he turned this over to Ray if he wanted to pursue it further.

Kathy Spiegelman thanked all of the Task Force members who took the time to tour the Harvard in Allston Exhibit room on Monday, January 30th. She expressed Harvard's sincerest apologies to John Bruno and John Cusack's parents who did not receive the message in time that the February 1st tour was canceled. Kathy expressed interest in rescheduling another tour for those Task Force members who weren't able to make the February 1st tour. She asked that anyone who was interested email her at Kathy_spiegelman@harvard.edu with their availability and she would try and reschedule another date and time.

Kathy introduced members from the Harvard community who were in attendance at the meeting including two of the presenters for the meeting Tom Lentz, Director of Harvard University Art Museums, and Russ Porter, Administrative Director of the Life Sciences Division for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Kathy also introduced Anthony Galluccio, Cambridge City Councilor, who was in attendance at the meeting.

Kathy announced that the Public Realm workshop regarding Barry's corner that had been tentatively scheduled for February 15th was rescheduled for Saturday, March 4th from 9:30-12:30 at the Honan-Allston Library. The workshop is being conducted by the Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a nonprofit organization based out of New York City that is dedicated to creating and sustaining public places that build community. PPS is working with Cooper, Robetson and Partners, the planning firm that is developing preliminary ideas and options for Harvard's campus and urban framework in Allston. PPS will also be conducting small group interviews on Friday, March 3rd to hear what issues the community and task force members are interested in talking more about in preparation for the workshop. Kathy encouraged anyone who was interested in participating in the group interviews to email her to sign up. Kathy handed out a

flyer to all the Task Force members and Mary Helen Black asked if it could also be emailed to all the Task Force members so that they could share it with others.

Gerald handed out three documents to help aide the Task Force members through the process. The first was the North Allston Neighborhood Strategic Plan (NANSP), which was completed in 2004 to reflect the City's and the community's vision for the North Allston neighborhood. The NANSP addresses housing, open space, land use, transportation, economic development, urban design, and environmental opportunities and creates a framework for Harvard's campus expansion that also enriches the neighborhood's quality of life. Gerald suggested looking at the plan as a set of guiding principles to use as we move forward before any specific plans have been provided by Harvard. The NANSP is good document to reference when comparing Harvard's vision with the neighborhood's vision to see how they align or differ. Gerald suggested that after the Task Force has some time to read it they could have a more concrete conversation about it.

The second document handed out was the Interim Report produced by Harvard's planning consultant Cooper, Robertson and Partner's (CRP). Gerald said that in some ways this document reflects a different vision than the NANSP and in some ways it is the next step in the process to see the ideas that Harvard is prioritizing and how some of these things can be brought to fruition. Gerald suggested looking at the two documents and the ideas laid out in each to compare them.

The third document handed out was Harvard's current Institutional Master Plan (IMP) from 1997 that lays out Harvard's vision for its existing campus. The IMP is the BRA's and Boston's regulatory document and institutional review mechanism. In the IMP the city asks the institution to lay out its big picture institutional goals for the future and how those goals translate to the physical planning needs of the institution. The IMP is the permitting mechanism used by the city for institutions. Without an IMP, Harvard cannot build. The IMP is designed to be a flexible mechanism and the city doesn't expect the University to be able to predict everything it is going to do over the next 10 years. Gerald said that the BRA's role is to look at how the development of Harvard in Allston will affect the overall economic development for the city.

Ray stated that the IMP has to survive administrations that come and go. The document is only as good as the Task Force makes it and he thinks that the Task Force has the skill and the intelligence to make it a meaningful document.

Tom Miller said that Harvard's IMP is different from IMPs of other institutions in that it is a longer term Master Plan that new pieces can be plugged into. In many ways, the BRA is asking a lot more of this Task Force because in addition to setting the framework, the Task Force needs to think about the longer term goals and vision the University is proposing.

Ray suggested that when reading the NANSP to work backwards and begin with the implementation section. The CRP Interim report and Harvard's IMP can be found on the Allston Initiative website (<http://www.allston.harvard.edu/>) and Harry Mattison said that the NANSAP can be found on the Goody Clancy website (http://www.goodyclancy.com/html/home_flash.asp).

NOTE: The plan is also available on the BRA's website at <http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/bra/pdf/publications//NAllstonSFPfinalDraft.pdf>

Kathy said that Harvard's IMP is driven by Harvard's program needs. Currently Harvard is looking at the geography and land that can best meet these needs. Harvard's scientists have very urgent program needs for interdisciplinary spaces. Kathy said that Harvard will be announcing shortly an architect and site for the first science building. Kathy said that there are 3 options for the science site: 1). on the land occupied by the Ohiri Soccer fields 2). partially on the Ohiri soccer fields and partially on/near the site of the existing WGBH buildings south of Western Avenue; or 3). all south of Western Avenue on/near the existing WGBH buildings.

Kathy introduced Russ Porter, Administrative Director of the Life Sciences Division for the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, to talk about the program needs for science at the University.

Russ spoke about the growing trend toward interdisciplinary facilities within the science fields in order to spark collaboration among scientists. The physical space and architecture of a science building can be a huge predictor of collaboration. Russ said that Allston presents a unique opportunity for interdisciplinary science. Currently there are several science campuses within Harvard. Allston presents an opportunity to bring all of these major science populations together. Russ believes that there is no other place in Boston or the country that is bringing scientists together in one campus or making such a bold statement as Harvard could do in Allston. Russ described an immediate need for the Stem Cell Institute to have better space to meet its program needs. There is a sense of urgency among the scientists, that while advancements are being made, it is being done at about one-fifth of Harvard's potential.

Paul Berkeley inquired about how the scientists balance and prioritize the many areas that could benefit from stem cell research. Russ said that the Institute is focusing primarily on disease related sciences such as blood, cancer, diabetes and Parkinson's. Michael Hanlon asked whether the estimate of 1 million square feet was really what the University was considering. Kathy said that the initial phase calls for approximately 500,000 square feet but over time it could evolve to a million square feet. Michael asked whether Harvard's School of Public Health would be built into the science complex and Kathy said that there may be common buildings and uses for the program areas that overlap. Michael asked how much land on Western Ave. 500,000 square feet would equate to. Kathy said that the amount of land would depend on the height of the buildings. Russ mentioned that a lot of science facilities plan large scale core and shared facilities underground, and that this approach could help reduce the density of some buildings.

Paul asked whether a tunnel system like the one used at HBS would be used for any of the new Allston buildings. Kathy said that CRP has looked at this option but emphasized that from a planning perspective, keeping people at street level is important to the place-making for the area.

Ray asked for an estimate of how many employees would occupy a 500,000 square-foot science building. Kathy said that it would house approximately 1,000 employees, and that the BRA has developed an estimate that for every job created in the life sciences field, 3 jobs in other fields are generated. Michael asked what the typical ratio is for square footage to people in science buildings, and Kathy said that is was about 1,000 people for 500,000 square feet.

Kathy said that the other program that is becoming a priority for the Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences is the arts and culture program. The 3 site options being considered for long-term

arts and culture program are: 1). a site south of Western Avenue, opposite Charlesview; 2). the current Charlesview site itself, assuming an acceptable relocation site can be identified for Charlesview; or 3). a portion of the Charlesview site and a portion of the site south of Western Avenue. In each option the focus is to locate the arts and culture programs on the edges of the community and the campus. Kathy introduced Tom Lentz, Director of Harvard University Art Museums (HUAM).

Tom said that the Harvard University Arts Museums consist of 3 museums: the Fogg Art Museum, the Busch-Reisinger, and the Sackler Museum. HUAM also has 4 research centers: Straus Center for Conservation, Center for Technical Study of Modern Art, Archeological Exploration of Sardis, and the HUAM archives. Tom said HUAM has the intention of becoming more open and accessible to students, faculty and community and is in the process of rethinking its physical space and how it operates. Currently there are major structural and space problems for all three buildings in Cambridge. The Fogg in particular is 50 years overdue for a renovation. Since the existing Fogg site will not allow for any significant expansion, Tom said HUAM is moving toward a two-site operating model with locations in both Cambridge and Allston.

Tom said establishing a presence in Allston calls for meeting both the short-term and long-term needs of the program. In the short term, HUAM would like a temporary swing space in Allston to use while the Fogg undergoes renovations. One site currently being considered is the former Citizen's bank building on Soldier's Field Road. The interim Allston site would house public exhibition space, visitor amenities, offices for the majority of the HUAM staff, classrooms, space for collection storage, and a conservation lab. After the Fogg is completed some of these things would move back to Cambridge. In the long-term, HUAM would like to establish a permanent site in Allston which is likely to include public viewing exhibition space, the Center for Technical Study of Modern Art, archive space, office space for the majority of the HUAM staff, and classroom and collection storage space. Establishing the program in Allston would be done in multiple phases over time and could result in a very effective operating model that makes sense for both the University and the community.

John Cusack said that building an art museum on the edge of the campus and community could serve as an anchor for the University and suggested that the presence of an art museum in Allston could be life enhancing. Mike Hanlon wondered if any discount tickets would be offered to the community. He asked what the size of the existing museum is today and whether it would be larger or small in Allston. Tom said that HUAM has about 180,000 gross square feet in Cambridge. Their desire is to have about 120,000 square feet on each side of the river. Paul asked about how the space is currently allocated in Cambridge and Tom said that due to lack of space, HUAM is able to exhibit only about one-half of one percent of its total collection.

Paul stated that over the past ten years it seems as though Harvard has used Allston for back-of-house functions (such as a staging area for construction projects in Cambridge), and he's very conscious of this. Tom responded that he wants the Allston site to be a fully functional arm of HUAM and that the sites in Cambridge and in Allston would accomplish two different program needs. Kathy also agreed and that the temporary location in Allston would be the seed to establish a permanent Allston location for arts and culture. Ray said that he didn't want the interactive aspects of the program to be available only in Cambridge, and that having arts and

culture in Allston could be a payoff for local schools. Tom said that the Allston site will be a working collection that would afford many opportunities for interactive programs. Kevin McCluskey pointed out that Allston is the only neighborhood in the country named after an artist and this could be a great link between HUAM and the neighborhood.

Millie was curious as to where the visitors to the temporary site in Allston were going to park and how many visitors come to HUAM each year. Tom said that around 125,000-150,000 people visit HUAM each year and that the Citizen's bank building does have parking for about 130 cars. Cathy wondered how many employees would be at the temporary space and if HUAM would be willing to designate a certain percentage of the parking spaces for museum visitors. Cathy emphasized that parking should be provided to a majority of the visitors so they don't end up parking on the neighborhood streets. She expressed concern and questioned whether this would be feasible with the Museum averaging over 2,000 visitors a week. Kathy and Tom agreed that this was something that would be tested in their upcoming feasibility study and that ultimately, providing enhanced shuttle service to and from Allston to Cambridge could play a big role in easing the parking restraints.

Gerald adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.